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ABSTRACT

Designed to be immediately useful and practical for language arts teachers in the secondary schools, the six articles in this monograph are illustrative not only of methods but of pedagogical processes that are the components of successful teaching. The first article offers more than 20 ways of motivating and involving the nonreader and describes the use of the contract method as a motivating device. The second article provides a step-by-step description of the process of preparing an inductive lesson plan for literature, while the third offers an illustration of the thematic approach in a literature class. The fourth article demonstrates the way composition may be integrated into the study of literature. Its suggestions include using the forms of literature for writing experiences and for extending the composition process to oral and dramatic expression. The fifth article addresses the teaching of drama as literature. After reviewing the primary elements of drama, it presents a number of activities for teachers of literature, discusses the need for excellence, and offers a list of plays. The final article contains a discussion of ways to assign and evaluate essays in the literature program. The monograph concludes with lists of sources for more ideas on literature teaching, of professional organizations, and of workshops and festivals. (FL)

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LANGUAGE ARTS MONOGRAPH

Ideas for the Literature Class, 7-12.

State Board of Education
Illinois Office of Education
Joseph M. Cronin
State Superintendent of Education

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FOREWORD

In October, 1974, twenty Illinois language arts professors, teachers and Illinois Office of Education consultants met in Urbana to discuss and to respond to the need for materials especially written for classroom teachers of language arts. The Urbana meeting focused upon a plan to print a number of monographs, each one emphasizing language arts and each one fitting into a series of monographs suggesting the depth of language arts education.

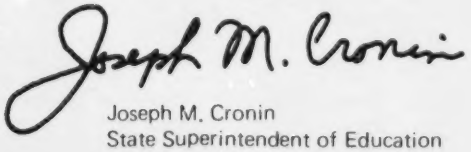
Following the Urbana meeting, monograph authors and editors collected, organized and explained ideas from nearly 50 Illinois contributors. Monograph titles, chapter titles, and section headings covering hundreds of currently employed language arts ideas and practices took shape.

The intent of all the monographs was to combine theory and practice into brief suggestions for classroom teachers of language arts. Although some of the suggestions are new to the profession, most reflect the best teaching practices by experienced Illinois teachers. Some monographs take controversial stances on issues, but even the controversial points of view are clearly within the realms of accepted pedagogy. As planned, all nine monographs report effective, often-used teaching practices.

Monograph authors and editors wrote from their own philosophies, and they wrote about the ways of teaching they knew best; no attempt was made to advance the cause of any particular educational practice or terminology. The monographs respond both to persistent issues as well as to modern trends in language arts education.

More than 50 teachers of language arts gave of their inspiration, time, and patience. Illinois students will profit from such professional efforts given for the good of education in Illinois.

A special thanks should be given to two Illinois Office of Education staff members — Mina Halliday and Alan Lemke. They conceived the idea for the monograph project, guided it to its completion, and made contributions to several monographs. The development of these monographs was a monumental effort to improve education in Illinois and the success of the project can be attributed to Ms. Halliday and Dr. Lemke.



Joseph M. Cronin
State Superintendent of Education

IDEAS FOR THE LITERATURE CLASS, 7-12

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Danville Community Consolidated District #118

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Lyons Township High School District #204

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St. Bede Academy

Township High School District #214

Wheaton High School District #200

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE
Dr. Fred Preston
Eastern Illinois University vii

MOTIVATING AND INVOLVING THE "NONREADER"
Ms. Kathleen Ngandu
Teachers College, University of Nebraska 1

DEVELOPING AN INDUCTIVE LESSON PLAN FOR LITERATURE
Mrs. Charlene Tibbetts
University High School, Urbana 7

A THEMATIC APPROACH IN THE LITERATURE CLASS
Mr. Delbert Willison
Mattoon High School 11

WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE
Dr. John Eckman
Valley View Public Schools, Bolingbrook 14

ASSIGNING AND EVALUATING ESSAYS
Dr. Alan C. Purvis
University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana 18

DRAMA AS LITERATURE
Dr. Norman Potts
Northern Illinois University 23

SOURCES FOR MORE IDEAS ON TEACHING LITERATURE 28

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS 29

WORKSHOPS AND FESTIVALS 30

PREFACE

The contributors to this monograph were asked to write articles which would be immediately useful and practical for the language arts teacher in the junior and senior high school. They have done just that. However, as teachers of the language arts are well aware, there are many methods for teaching literature. The National Council of Teachers of English and its state affiliates publish many journals and books each year in addition to sponsoring countless workshops and conventions across the country. Many teachers benefit immeasurably from these activities, yet it is also true that some try one idea or method after another, often with little long-range benefit to their teaching.

The articles which appear in this monograph will, hopefully, prove to be of lasting benefit to the readers because they are illustrative not only of methods but of pedagogical processes research has shown to be the components of successful teaching. For example, each of the authors either states or implies that careful planning is necessarily a part of the program suggested. And each author appears to operate from the assumption that mutual trust and respect have been established in the classroom. The listing of assumptions could be extended, but the idea is clear: a method is only one of the variables operating in the classroom.

It is the teachers, finally, who as they seek answers for the many questions arising naturally from their work, will acquire various means for handling the content of the course. The contributors and I hope that the ideas suggested in these papers will serve to stimulate the reader's creative thinking. The ideas, and there are many of them in each article, coalesce to provide a positive, professional approach to the teaching of literature; however, they need not be read at one sitting even though they are complementary in the sense described above. Particular concerns may dictate an order different from the arrangement in this monograph. For instance, if the reader is concerned about involving nonreaders in the English class, Kathleen Ngandu, an Assistant Professor of Elementary Education at the University of Nebraska, offers well over twenty suggestions, specific in nature, and describes the use of the contract method as a motivating device.

Charlene Tibbetts, University High School English Department chairman, Urbana, Illinois, takes the reader, appropriately, step-by-step through the process of preparing an inductive lesson plan for literature. Her generous use of examples and logical, sequential approach serve to clarify this planning process.

Delbert Willison, Mattoon High School English Department chairman, Mattoon, Illinois, using the theme of identity, suggests many activities and literary selections for the classroom. His examples may be used to model similar units on other themes.

John Eckman, Valley View Public Schools, Romeoville and Bolingbrook, Illinois, demonstrates the way composition may be integrated into the study of literature. His suggestions include using the forms of literature for writing experiences and the use of oral and dramatic expression.

Norman Potts, Professor of Theatre at Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, addresses the teaching of drama as literature. After reviewing the primary elements of drama, he offers numerous activities for teachers of literature, exemplifies his concern for excellence, and offers a list of plays.

Alan Purves, professor of English and Education, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, fittingly rounds out the monograph with his discussion of ways to assign and evaluate essays in the literature program. Specific suggestions for evaluating creative work and the use of several examples make this a very readable essay.

Fred Preston, Assistant Professor of
English Education, Eastern Illinois
University, Charleston, Illinois.

MOTIVATING AND INVOLVING THE "NONREADER"

Kathleen Ngandu

Ms. Kathleen Ngandu is an assistant professor of education at the University of Nebraska and recently was a reading specialist at Champaign Centennial High School. Kathleen's publications appear in **The Wisconsin English Journal** and in **Early Years.**

Wouldn't it be fantastic if I could give you all the answers and a step-by-step panacea for students who proclaim "I can't" or "I won't" read? Behaviors of such students may initially seem to substantiate such statements, but don't believe it and quit right there. In my years of experience working with students ranging in age from 4-55, I've come to the conclusion that once a person is motivated, he or she can and will read, while at the same time enjoying it.

At Centennial High School (Champaign, Illinois) where I was employed as a reading specialist, it was my experience that most of the students enrolled in reading improvement classes shared at least two or more of the following characteristics:

1. Scores on their standardized test results were low. (Why not? The kids hate taking these exams.)

2. Discipline problems were prevalent. (Isn't this just a way of asking for attention?)

3. Students had typically been in elementary and/or junior high school reading classes and were tired of the usual workbooks, reading machines, and skill-drill routine. (Wouldn't you be ready for a change of pace too?)

4. Complaints about school in general go hand in hand with fluctuations in attendance. (If the only reinforcement I were getting was in the form of "D""s, "F""s, and principal reprimand slips, I'd probably dislike my job, too.)

With this type of student, there is a stronger case for motivating them above and beyond what is typically appropriate for the "average" pupil. The contract system has worked in my class and in others as a motivant for the nonreader.

The Contract System

The contract method, as used to organize a student's time, assignments, and grades has been a very successful approach with my students.

At the start of each term, every student receives a colored, two-pocket folder. On the left side is stapled a "Quarter Contract Requirement" form (see example p. 2), which clearly specifies what he or she will be expected to do in earning a desired grade. Certain categories as well as point requirements must be fulfilled by each student. Thus the student's desired grade and assignments are always in full view when the folder is opened. This method of evaluation eliminates the great degree of subjectiveness associated with grades, as well as the normal curve which will allow only a small proportion of "A" grades to be granted. Each student is being evaluated according to his or her own performance.

In the classroom there are appropriate materials ranging from elementary difficulty through high school levels; therefore, assignments take into consideration a pupil's reading level as well as interests.

On the right-hand side of the folder is kept a "Record of Activities" form (see example p. 3). At the start of the week, each student plans a five-day schedule. I plan about half of the activities, while the other half is jointly planned by the student and myself. So students do have a great deal of input in deciding what they will be doing each week. I have found that giving students the responsibility to plan their tasks makes them more concerned with successful completion of their work. They are more apt to do an assignment if they participate in planning it. At the end of each day's class, students record what actually was accomplished and make comments on how the day went. These entries are a great assistance to me as I am planning for their continuing experiences in my classroom.

I record points at the end of each day for participation in certain activities, as well as for completion of various other assignments. This daily reinforcement in knowing how well one is doing is essential for my students. There are times when I almost chuckle to see how closely they watch their cumulative totals grow and also check the progress of their friends. Peer pressure can also add incentive to perform.

Once a week a scheduled 5-10 minute conference is held with each student to discuss progress as well as future work. During the week, there are several informal contacts with each student to talk about particular assignments, as well as any other concern a student may have. Keeping an open rapport with students and letting them know that you are genuinely interested in them also does have a positive effect on their progress.

SAMPLE: QUARTER CONTRACT REQUIREMENT

Directions: Your grade for this quarter will depend upon the number of points that you earn, as well as the completion of various set requirements. Points will be given for activities that you do. (Points will be subtracted for nonparticipation or inappropriate class conduct.) Read the following contract and decide which grade you plan on working for. Then sign the statement on the lower part of this page. If you finish your contract before the end of the quarter, you may earn more points and qualify for a higher grade. If you do not finish your contract before the end of the quarter, you will earn a grade equal to your number of points and assignments that you have done.

	minimum point value for each	minimum number of items needed for a grade of:		
		C	B	A
1. Planning and Conference	2	1 each week (usually)		
2. Group Activity	3	1-2 each week (usually)		
3. Vocabulary Session	3	1 each week (usually)		
4. Content Study	3	1 each week (usually)		
5. Paperback and Discussion	15	0	1	1
6. Short Story and Questions	2-3	6	8	9
7. SRA Power Builder	2	4	5	6
8. Puzzles, Language Exercises, Games, Scope Books, etc.	1-2	3	4	5
9. Project	6	1	1	1
10. Optional Choice (magazines, assemblies, etc.)	1	This will vary		
TOTAL POINTS NEEDED	HONORS 260	C 140-179	B 180-219	A 220-259

After reading this contract and discussing it with my instructor, I have decided to work for a grade of _____. for which I will need_____ points. If I change my mind, and want to try for another grade, I will tell my teacher before the end of the quarter.

Student's Signature_____ DATE_____

Date of Contract Completion _____ Grade for Quarter _____

Instructor's Signature _____

Other Important Motivating Devices

In addition to the contract system, I use a wide variety of other techniques, focusing on internal as well as external motivation. Verbal praise, in addition to written comments, is provided to students who are trying, as well as on those who are succeeding. Physical pats also seem to be well received by many of my students--yes, even those big, husky football players. I contact parents by phone or letter at least once each term to express something positive about their son or daughter. Negative comments are kept to a minimum in these communications, because the main goal is for parents to look favorably on their offspring's efforts. And, some of my students comment on the fact that their parents were really surprised "to hear something nice about me for a change." Sending verbal praise home to parents adds to feelings of success and to my students' willingness to read. Praise for those students who choose to do work beyond the A grade level

SAMPLE: Record of Activities

NAME _____ HOUR _____ WEEK OF _____

DAY	PLANS	Specific Work Done and Comments	Point Categories									
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
MONDAY												
TUESDAY												
WEDNESDAY												
THURSDAY												
FRIDAY												

CONFERENCE NOTES

WEEK'S TOTAL POINTS _____

CUMULATIVE TOTAL POINTS _____

CUMULATIVE GRADE TO DATE _____

comes in the form of honors certificates, lettered in script, proclaiming that the recipient has excelled in English for the particular grading period. A fifty-cent McDonald's gift certificate also accompanies this document, to help spur on those needing a more tangible, or should I say, edible, incentive.

To many students special access to pleasant reading environments and to special reading materials acts as a motivant. A yellow, "reading-rocker," library pass and access to a separate, enclosed study carrel add variety to the incentives a student has to participate in class activities. Access to special reading materials occurs in my class when each student is allowed to order one paperback book each term. Most students are interested in reading and responding to books of their own choice. Oftentimes students will trade books with others, after reading descriptions of different books from a "What Do You Recommend I Read?" bulletin board. (Index cards made out by students briefly give the plots of various books which have been read.)

I try to keep my classroom aesthetically pleasing and comfortable; bright posters and bulletin boards with student projects enliven the walls. Areas of the classroom are set up for formal presentations as well as informal small group, tutorial and individual work. Several areas of the room are designated for specific and special literature-related activities, such as the book making area, the listening post, the word-game table, and the magazine center. Activity centers add diversity and interest to the reading environment.

In addition to making the room physically pleasant, there is also an attempt to keep the vibrations pleasant. Students are treated as if they are important, because in fact they are, and because they need to realize this. A continual effort is being made to reinforce the opinion that this is a nice place to come to during the day. I believe that affective concerns can do wonders—much more than any syllabication rule or ten phonics generalizations ever will.

Additional Specific Suggestions for the Classroom Teacher

1. Find out about your students by administering an interest inventory (see sample, p. 5). This can help you select materials your students are interested in.

2. Check the cumulative files for standardized reading test results. These will give you a very rough estimate of ability. Any student scoring in stanines 1-3, or grade equivalent lower than 2 years below grade placement, will probably require assistance, both in developing reading abilities and in motivation.

3. Expect a range of reading abilities. If you teach a sophomore class, you may find some students functioning at mid-elementary levels, while others will be capable of doing college level work. Therefore, assignments should be diversified and individualized whenever possible.

4. Incorporate all aspects of language arts in your program – speaking, listening, writing, as well as reading. Discussions are often areas in which "poor" readers can excell and find reasons to read. Oral reading of plays, such as those found in **Scope** and **Voice** ,Scholastic Books), give students a good opportunity to interpret characters, actions and situations.

5. Use a variety of media besides your standard texts. Some students reject a massive literature anthology, but respond well to paperbacks. Don't forget about films, tapes, newspapers, magazines, etc.

6. Incorporate some high interest, low readability level materials in your program (such as the Allyn and Bacon Breakthrough Series, or books from Scope–Scholastic).

7. Provide choices for your students. For example, during a particular unit of study, certain activities will be common for all; however, you can offer alternatives of varying difficulty for optional and reinforcing activities.

8. Try variations of the standard book report. How about a conference, a panel discussion, or a "make your own book-jacket" project? "Selling a book" over the P.A. is also a unique idea some students may want to try. (see p. 6)

9. Remember, you're working towards improving attitudes about reading, as much as toward reading skills. If the affective domain (values, feelings, responses) is reached, this can only help the student improve his or her cognitive comprehension (understandings, inferences, evaluations, etc.)

10. When possible, relate reading materials to personal experiences of students. If some bond can be established between the material and the student, it will be easier for him or her to get involved.

11. Teach your students to set purposes for their reading—to ask questions while reading. For example, "How does the title relate to this selection?" or "What is the author's opinion on this topic?" If a student has some focus, he or she will be more likely to concentrate on the reading.

12. Practice developing reading techniques with items such as social security forms, income tax statements, auto accident forms, credit card

SAMPLE: READING INTEREST INVENTORY

NAME _____ HOUR _____ DATE _____

Directions: Please answer the following questions as completely as possible. In some cases, just check the correct choice.

1. Do you enjoy reading? Not at all ____ ; A little ____ ; An average amount ____ ; A lot ____ .

2. Check the kinds of reading you enjoy most. Short stories ____ ; Paperback Books ____ ; Poems ____ ; Magazines ____ ; Comics ____ ; Others ____ ; (Please list _____).

3. Do you buy or own many books, or use the library frequently? _____

4. Check the way you like best to read. Orally ____ ; Silently ____ .

5. Check the reading topics that are your favorite:

love stories	____	Indians (native Americans)	____	horses	____
baseball	____	black history	____	space travel	____
criminals	____	Spanish speaking people	____	science fiction	____
war stories	____	people of other lands	____	travel articles	____
murder mysteries	____	how to make things	____	encyclopedia	____
famous people	____	football	____	politics	____
mathematics	____	teen-agers' problems	____	stories of gangs	____
historical tales	____	nature stories	____	stories of mystery	____
mythology	____	scientific experiments	____	stories of danger (spy tales)	____
true life adventure	____	basketball	____	others (please list)	____
poetry	____	dictionaries	____	_____	
movie stars	____	essays	____	_____	
automobiles	____			_____	

6. Name the best book you ever read _____ .

7. Name the worst book you ever read _____ .

8. Name some books or magazines you have read recently _____

_____ .

9. Do you read the newspapers? Sometimes ____ ; Often ____ ; Never ____ .

10. What games or sports do you like best? _____

11. Do you have a pet? ____ If so, what kind(s) _____ .

12. Do you collect anything? ____ If so, what? _____

13. What kinds of reading materials would you like included in the class? _____

_____

_____

14. Do you enjoy: Listening to the radio? ____ ; Watching TV? ____ ; Going to the movies? ____ ; Attending plays? ____ .

applications, leases, bank loan papers, etc. Not only do these provide variety, but also give the students survival information for functioning in our society.

13. Use some content materials from sciences, social studies, and math classes. Transfer of reading techniques to these areas is a must, if your teaching is to be effective. One of the most successful content materials I have used is the driver's education manual. The desire for the driver's license provides great motivation.

14. Teach study techniques which will help students organize and analyze reading materials (i.e.: outlining, notetaking, SQ3R, locating the main idea, etc.)

15. Teach your students how to use the library. Also introduce use of reference materials. Include some practice with atlases, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and the thesaurus.

16. Show your students how to use several word attack strategies on words they do not know. When difficult words are encountered, students could use the following strategies to derive meaning: context—the surrounding words; structure—roots and affixes, as well as syllabication; sound—basic few phonics generalizations; dictionary; ask someone.

17. Teach vocabulary. Some emphasis should be put on vocabulary development, through a formal or informal plan. Students can keep personal notebooks in which they record several "new or difficult" words they want to learn. This way, the students will be selecting the appropriate level of difficulty for themselves.

18. Provide opportunities for students to work in groups, with peer interaction and tutoring. Oftentimes this learning situation can be more effective than any lesson you could present.

19. Allow time for uninterrupted, sustained, silent reading. If possible, schedule at least a half hour period per week during which students can read materials of their own choice, for pleasure. At the same time, you should catch up on some enjoyable reading yourself to demonstrate that you like reading, too. It's not the time to do lesson plans!

20. Provide an opportunity for success. These suggestions are intended to stimulate your thinking about other activities and teaching ideas which will work in your classes, as you work toward this goal.

Conclusion

Motivating the nonreader is not easy, but sincere and consistent verbal praise, the quarter contract system, a diversity of reading materials at all reading levels, and a number of exciting classroom activities have contributed significantly to my students' attitudes about my class and about reading.

SAMPLE: ALTERNATIVES TO BOOK REPORTS

1. Who is the main character of the story? Write him a letter; suggest what might have happened if the character had acted in a different way.

2. How and why did you feel about some character in the story? Pick out sentences that made you feel as you did.

3. Write some sentences from the story that show that someone was excited, sad, happy, or ashamed.

4. Is the story about the present, past, or future? Make a drawing about something in the story that led to this conclusion.

5. Write in alphabetical order 20 new words that you found in the story.

6. Write in alphabetical order 10 words of a certain type (mysterious, fantasy, etc.) that you found in the story.

7. Write three sentences from the book where the author did not really mean what he or she said on the surface.

8. Write eight sentences from the story that are not complete and see if someone else can complete them.

9. Find sentences in the story that tell a) how something sounds, b) how something looks, c) how something feels.

10. Write or find a piece of music that would show the feel of the book.

11. Make ten vocabulary cards. Put the word on the front – on back write the pronunciation, a definition, and a sample sentence. Then test out a friend and teach three words he or she doesn't know.

12. Select characters from 2 books and have them meet, and write their conversation.

13. Choose a story character and pretend something he or she owned in the story is lost. Write an advertisement for the daily paper's lost and found column in order to get it back.

14. Write a comparison of a character in the story and a person you know. How are they alike? How are they different? Tell by comparing and contrasting.

15. Find three pictures that fit the main character in the story. Write about each of the reasons for choosing it.

16. Draw a picture of one of the memorable scenes in the story. Show as many details as you can.

17. Locate information about the place where the story took place. Locate the place on a map or globe. Tell a friend five things you learned about the location.

18. Write three questions that can only be answered by reading the story. Then answer the questions.

19. List five characters from the story across the top of your paper. Write five characteristics of each person under each name then write the opposite of each of these descriptive words that you have.

20. Tell the high points of the story in five brief sentences.

21. Pretend you are a news editor in the city where the characters lived. Write two news articles that could have appeared during the time the story took place. Write headlines for your stories.

22. Write three riddles for the story. Put them on a card with the answers on the back. Now try them on a friend.

23. Make a poster advertising your story. Make it bright, bold, and simple. Put it up for others to see.

24. Invent a symbol alphabet, then write a message to a friend about an exciting part of the story you read, having the friend decode it.

25. Make your story into a popular rock song. Write it down and sing it to the class if you want to.

26. Pretend a character from your book meets a character from another book you have read. They meet at a football game, or they both grab for the mustard at the same time. Write or record their conversation.

27. Write an epilogue to your book. Put down what you think could have happened after the book ended.

28. On what day of the month is your birthday? Open to that page of the book, then make a list of the first word on the next ten pages. See if you can write a story, or the beginning of a story using those ten words.

29. Suppose you have written to a character in your book and asked what character wants for his or her birthday. Make a list of ten presents he or she might have asked for, and explain why.

30. Choose a place from the story. Write a legend about that place.

DEVELOPING AN INDUCTIVE LESSON PLAN FOR LITERATURE

Charlene Tibbetts

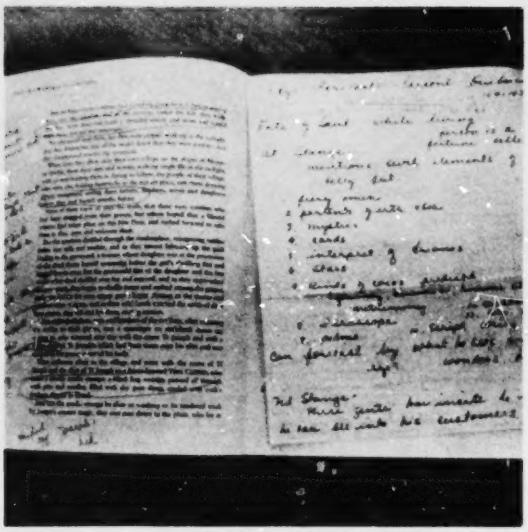
Mrs. Charlene Tibbetts is a teacher of English and an author of English education materials at University High School in Urbana. Charlene is the editor of the IATE ***Newsletter.***

The **inductive method** of teaching literature (or **discovery method**, as it is sometimes called) depends upon a particular arrangement of questions that lead students to draw conclusions from the text. In order for the inductive method to succeed, teachers should do the following:

1. Identify teaching objectives;

2. Know the literary work thoroughly;

3. Develop certain literary definitions and premises regarding the works under discussion (Teacher and the students must agree to use these definitions and premises consistently, or agree to change them when necessary.);



4. Maintain (with the cooperation of the students) a classroom environment conducive to the dialogues employed in the inductive method.

By identifying their objectives, teachers can frame their questions so that students can draw their own conclusions. The question may be classified on the basis of the objectives. Assume that one of the objectives is to make students aware of the point of view used in the diary form. In a discussion of Anne Frank's **The Diary of a Young Girl**, for example, if teachers know where they are heading and what conclusion they hope to develop, they can frame their questions to help students identify the first-person viewpoint used. Closely associated with this conclusion, of course, would be a discussion of Anne's reliability as a judge of character and unbiased narrator of the events that occur in the Secret Annexe.

A more sophisticated objective for the same work might be to help the student come to the conclusion that the ending of the **Diary** is ironic. As Anne matures she becomes more tolerant, more considerate, and more able to accept the other members of the Secret Annexe. Yet, ironically, when she has become a constructive member of her small society, she is arrested and carried off to a concentration camp, where she is murdered by the Nazis.

The best way to identify the objectives in a literary work is to be thoroughly familiar with it. A teacher cannot depend too much on a publisher's curriculum guide because teachers must be prepared to shift direction at any time during a class discussion. They can do this only if they know their objectives and the work thoroughly. They should concentrate on what the work itself says and not put too much emphasis on the author's life or the history of the time. As Flannery O'Connor so aptly put it: "A work of art exists without its author from the moment the words are on paper, and the more complete the work, the less important it is who wrote it or why . . . Good fiction deals with human nature."[1]

Teachers who wish to use the inductive method successfully should read the work at least twice (for longer works) before arranging their questions. They should reread the work again before teaching it. On the first reading, jot down the ways in which it might be used. If they are in the process of teaching literary terms to younger students, for instance, teachers can frame their questions to help students come to an understanding of abstract terms such as irony, motif, and theme.

The second time the teachers read the work, they should jot down questions that come to them, keeping appropriate page-number references on note cards. These questions will become the basis for the objectives teachers wish to achieve. If the work is fictional, they can ask themselves questions like the following:

1. Is the narrator reliable? Is the viewpoint consistent?
2. Are the characters believable? Do they act with integrity within the framework of the caracterization?
3. What are the recurring motifs? How do they relate to the theme(s)?
4. How important is the setting?
5. What attitude does the author take toward the subject? Is there a prevailing mood or tone to the work?
6. Is the time sequence chronological? Are there flashbacks? Does the time sequence change?
7. What is the theme of the work?

If the selection is poetry the teachers can ask themselves questions like the following:

1. Who is the speaker? What is the attitude toward his or her subject?
2. Can the poem be divided into parts? What is its structure?
3. What repetitions are there and what do they do?
4. What kind of a mood does the poem create?
5. What is the theme of the poem?
6. What are the images and figures of speech? How do they support the theme?

7. What is the rhyme scheme of the poem? The meter? How do they support the theme?

After the second reading of the work, teachers can look over their note cards and classify them. In a careful reading of **The Diary of a Young Girl**, for example, the teacher will find many references to Anne's change from childhood to adolescence in the period she spends in hiding. Her comments about Peter, Margot, and her mother show that she learns a great deal about getting along with other people in the Secret Annexe. With appropriate questions, the teacher can lead students to identify the change that Anne goes through. It is possible, for instance, that all these references could be classified under the category of **Anne's maturing process.**

The final stage in the analysis of the work in order to develop a teaching plan is to read the critics. Some authorities believe that one should read the critics first. Many overworked teachers may have to in order to keep up with the heavy work load imposed upon English teachers in the public schools today. But looking at the criticism first may take some of the excitement out of developing an original lesson plan. It may also prevent teachers from forming their own opinions about literary works.

In order for the inductive method to succeed, teachers need to develop certain literary definitions and premises regarding the work under discussion. Teachers and the students should agree to use these definitions and premises consistently or agree to change them when necessary. Before discussing the theme of **Julius Caesar**, for example, teachers and students can already have developed the premise: **Since** Julius Caesar **is a serious play, it has a theme.** They can also agree on a definition of **theme.** These premises and definitions do not always have to be explicitly stated before each discussion, but both the class and the teacher must agree on a definition of **theme** and recognize that not all plays have one.

Continuing with the example of **Julius Caesar**, it is possible to draw evidence from the play to provide a "chain" of specific instances that lead to a conclusion about the theme of the play. (For the purposes of economy, the amount of specific evidence has been reduced to a manageable number for the following chain.)

First question: **What is Brutus' attitude toward Antony's giving a speech?**

First answer (specific evidence): Brutus does not realize the danger in allowing Antony to speak to the people.

Second question: **What is Cassius' attitude toward Antony?**

Second answer (specific evidence): Cassius realizes that Antony is an enemy, and he wants him killed.

Third question: **What is Brutus' belief about the people?**

Third answer (specific evidence): Brutus believes that the people will listen to reason.

Fourth question: **What is Cassius' view of the people?**

Fourth answer (specific evidence): Cassius has a low opinion of the people and believes they cannot be trusted.

Fifth question (leading to conclusion #1): **On the basis of this evidence, describe the political philosophies of each man.**

INDUCTIVE LEAP #1

CONCLUSION #1: Brutus is an "idealist;" Cassius is a "realist."[2]

Sixth question (leading to conclusion #2): **If Brutus and Cassius have a conflict, and if they represent idealism and realism in politics, what is the theme of the play, Julius Caesar?**

INDUCTIVE LEAP #2

CONCLUSION #2: **Julius Caesar is a play about the conflict between** "idealism" and "realism".

It is possible to apply the same process to **The Diary of a Young Girl** once the class agrees on the premise **Diaries are usually written from the first-person point of view.** Moving from this premise, the class can follow the next part of the lesson:

First question: **Who does Anne write to in her diary?**

First answer (specific evidence): Anne writes to an imaginary girl named Kitty.

Second question: **What does Anne tell Kitty?**

Second answer (specific evidence): Anne describes her loneliness.

Third specific evidence: Anne comments on the other people in hiding.

Fourth specific evidence: Anne vents her anger and frustration.

Fifth specific evidence: Anne discusses her philosophy of life.

Third question (leading to conclusion #1): **Why does Anne tell Kitty these things?**

INDUCTIVE LEAP #1

CONCLUSION #1: Anne needs someone to talk to because there is no one her age in the Secret Annexe she feels close to when she first goes into hiding.

Fourth question (leading to conclusion #2): **Why does Anne call her diary Kitty rather than** James, Jim **or** Joe?

INDUCTIVE LEAP #2

CONCLUSION #2: Anne makes up a girls name to write to because she is the age when she would have a close girl friend to confide in if she were living a normal life.

At this point in the lesson, another chain of inductive specifics could be derived to form another set of conclusions by asking a question based on CONCLUSION #2: **In what way is Anne like any other 13-year-old girl?**

These are typical questions and conclusions in a well designed inductive program. What can the teachers do to make such programs work well in their classroom? From the beginning, they can set the tone for a class by being patient with students and allowing enough time for their discoveries to occur. They should maintain an objective attitude toward the answers provided by students and not condemn or criticize responses that seem inexact or irrelevant. (Rather than condemning answers as "wrong," it is better to collect all the possible answers for the question under discussion and then sort out the better ones.) It is also necessary to refer constantly to the text whenever there is a doubt as to the "correctness" of answers. In this kind of teaching, the text is the bible.

How does a teacher keep a few students from making conclusions before the other members of the class have had an opportunity to do so? One way is to prevent the students from seeing the sequence of questions and draw the conclusion at the beginning of the discussion. Another way is to give all the students a chance to participate, thereby cutting down on the monopoly that some students want to hold on a lesson. If, however, after all precautions have been taken, a perceptive student **does** state a conclusion long before the evidence has been examined, make the best of the situation. Review the evidence, ask for additional facts, and restate the conclusion.

Students should have an opportunity to ask questions. But it is usually best to use their questions before the classroom discussion begins so that their ideas can be incorporated into the lesson as it progresses. For example, during a discussion of Robert Penn Warren's "Blackberry Winter" students often ask what the last line means, even before they have had an opportunity to discuss the story. A teacher should put off telling a class more than is absolutely necessary. Instead, a teacher should frame questions in such a way that students can make their own discoveries. Questions which lead to identifying Warren's stranger as the personification of evil make the last line, "But I did follow him, all the years" more meaningful than if the teacher answers their questions early in the discussion and **tells** them that the stranger represents evil.

Students need to believe that they have a stake in the progress of the class. They should listen to one another so that repetition of the same points does not occur. They can relate new points to those already made. If the members of the class treat each other with respect no one will feel defensive because one member takes a point of view about the lesson different from that of others. Students and teacher should not interrupt each other or talk to others in the class while a student is answering a question or making a point. When appropriate classroom environment is maintained by both teacher and students, the inductive method has a good chance of success.

One of the advantages of the inductive method is that it provides an opportunity for a variety of interesting classroom activities and discussions. Some of these activities can follow the rhetorical patterns of classification, comparison-contrast, cause-effect, process, and definition. For example, in order for students to understand the **Odyssey** well, they should be able to identify the qualities of the epic hero. In a comparison-contrast exercise based on class responses, the teacher can have the students identify all the qualities of a good man (using modern stan-

dards) and the qualities of a hero, using Odysseus as a model. As the students identify the qualities of the two, the teacher or a student can list them on the board. Thus, students will discover that they are involved in the rhetorical pattern of comparison-contrast. After identifying and listing the qualities of the good man and the epic hero, it is possible for the class, with the teacher's guidance in an inductive lesson, to develop definitions of **epic hero** and **good man**.

Another advantage of the inductive method is that the teacher can assign composition topics which provide an opportunity for each student to make a conclusion. For instance Anne Frank gives few physical descriptions of the members of her family. She doesn't tell the reader how they dress, what color hair they have, or how tall they are. A teacher can ask the students to write a physical description of one of the members of Anne's family, based on the evidence they find in the **Diary**. In the process of studying for this assignment, students will discover that everything the reader knows about Anne's family is filtered through her perceptions, prejudices, and judgments, but she does not give specific information that allows a reader to "see" the family physically. Nevertheless, her characters are life-like because her method of characterization is psychologically accurate. After the students have made this conclusion about Anne's method of characterization, they can share their evidence and conclusions in a classroom discussion.

The inductive teacher method employs a dialogue between teacher and student and between students and other students. It allows an opportunity for students to check each other's response, based on the information provided in the text. It also allows them to become more independent in the study of literature because they are constantly drawing their conclusions from the evidence provided. There are advantages for teachers as well. They will enjoy seeing students make discoveries, and they will know certain literary works thoroughly. Most important, teachers will learn from the students because they also have good ideas about literature.

[1] **Mystery and Manners**, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969, p. 126.

[2] In the class discussion, there would probably be a separate inductive process dealing with the terms **idealist** and **realist**.

A THEMATIC APPROACH IN THE LITERATURE CLASS

Delbert Willison

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Writers and philosophers as early as the Greeks have considered one of man's greatest quests to be "know thyself." The search to know self evolves from many sources: one's reflection seen in a clear pool on a sunny day, one's image seen in another person, or one's hearing comments made by family or friends. In attempts to organize and categorize feelings and attitudes, one soon realizes that in such a constantly changing world this is a process of evaluation and re-evaluation.

Literature, however, offers an opportunity to examine the lives of characters as they, too, pursue avenues leading to the discovery of self. Thus, learning to understand the values and motivation of characters in certain literary selections is one way students can learn more about other people and about themselves. In addition to the literature and its exploration, additional activities can enable students to focus their attention upon a sharper picture of themselves.

The concept of identity lends itself readily to the thematic approach, a concentration on one theme through many literary selections. (Such units can be established by students brainstorming topics, by the teacher handing out controlled lists and asking students to reach a class consensus, or by the teacher limiting the units because of available materials or desired sequence.)

The following material is a list of suggested activities, games, or ideas that might be utilized along with a literary unit dealing with identity. (Several of the activities could be modified to fit other units.)

On the first day of the unit students are asked to list ten words or phrases, other than their names, which describe or identify who they are. These are collected, students are asked to move their chairs into a circle, a student draws out a list, reads it, and the class tries to guess the name of the person described in the list. (Be sure to tell students these lists will be shared so no one will be embarrassed.) Students often find the identification difficult unless there are outstanding characteristics. From this activity, one can easily lead into a discussion about what identified the individual, what makes each of us unique. Along with

this, a record such as Simon and Garfunkel's **"A Most Peculiar Man"** or Don McLain's **Vincent** can further interest students in the question of identity.

In addition to the investigation of novels, plays, short stories, and poems dealing with the identity theme, the following activities can be interspersed throughout.

1. **colors**- Students are asked to jot down a color which they see the teacher as being. At the same time, teachers jot down what color they see themselves as being. Students volunteer to say what color they see the teacher as and explain why. Finally, teachers reveal what they have written and explain. Volunteers from the class have others identify them by color, repeating the same process. (Because this can be a threatening activity to some, it may not be for some individuals or classes.)

2. **animals**- This is a similar activity to **colors** except a teacher can make it less threatening by allowing the students to choose an animal they would like to be and explain why. (Again, no one is forced to participate and anyone can say, "I pass.")

3. **shapes**- This, too, is similar to **colors** except one could assign it the day before and ask students to bring in shapes they have found or cut out to explain how they see themselves.

4. **records**- Students are asked to bring in pieces of music which they feel identifies them. Students could play their own records and explain them or the instructor could have the music brought in earlier and thus have random selection so students could guess the owner's identity. (Because this activity could take several class periods, the instructor might limit the number of selections per day and continue with other activities of reading, discussing, etc.)

5. **brochures**- Students are given a sheet of drawing paper and one or two crayons or magic markers. They are asked to fold the paper so that they will have six equal writing surfaces much like a brochure or pamphlet. On each of the six surfaces they are asked to portray pictorially one of six positive characteristics they see within themselves. (Example: If one is warm, he might draw a sun radiating heat. If another is friendly, she might picture herself meeting other people.) Students should understand that the quality of art is unimportant. Stick figures are quite acceptable. When students have finished, have them leave their brochures at their desks and walk around to see others. Follow up discussions or writing assignments stressing these characteristics could follow.

6. **nine squares**- Students are given a sheet of art paper and crayons. They are asked to divide one side of the paper into nine most significant times in their lives. These moments do not need to be significant to anyone else but the drawer—one's first teddy bear, some pressed flowers. Again, one's artistic ability is unimportant. Students could be asked to use eight significant moments and the ninth square could be what they see themselves doing in the future (their vocation). When students finish, these are taped to the wall and students view each others. Stories about one significant moment, essays about lives, or poems about specific areas could be follow up assignments.

7. **montages**- Students names are placed in a hat and a secret drawing takes place just as one might draw names for Christmas. Students then must secretly observe the person whose name they drew for at least two weeks. Then they must compose a montage which identifies the person whose name they have. Montages are brought in before class on a given day and are numbered and placed on the wall. When students come to class, they are to take pencil and paper, look at each montage and correlate number with the person the montage is about. Most important of all, they are to find montages about themselves and try to figure out who did it. Everyone sits down and starting with number one, the person who thinks it is his or hers, discusses why. The creator keeps quiet until that person is

finished and then fills in any answered question or identifies the montage correctly if an error has been made.

8. **life boxes-** Students are to select no fewer than three and no more than seven items which represent something significant about themselves. They then select a box in which to place these items. The inside and outside of the box are to be painted, papered, and/or decorated in some manner significant to the owner and contents. (A black box might contain death symbols.) At least one side of the box should be open, openable, or peepholed. The objects should be arranged in the box to communicate a significant impression both symbolically and/or aesthetically. Again, these are brought in before class, numbered, and arranged. Students with paper and pencil view the box and try to guess. Each creator displays his or hers before the class and explains the content and the box. Questions can be asked and answered. **OR** a simpler version might be the same objects placed in a paper sack and then shared with the class.

9. Drawing an imaginary line down the center of the room, the leader asks students to move to the side they identify with most.

saver	spender
rose	daisy
lighter	lover

(make up appropriate lists)

10. Opinionaires for thematic units help students to establish a mind set.

a) Would you rather go to the beach or the mountains?

b) Would you rather talk to friends or read a book?

Activities such as the above engage students mental processes—questions, images, feelings, or conclusions—encountered by authors as they write and by readers. Although students are invited to take each activity seriously and to ask questions about his or her own identity as well as the identity of others, the primary purpose of these activities has to do with the harmony, the areas of compatability, between these classroom activities and the literature read and taught. These activities dramatically expose human characteristics—the bridge between student readers and the printed page.

The following literary selections can be used in this particular unit. There are, of course, many others which could be added to the lists.

Short Stories

"Paul's Case"	Willa Cather
"The Hunger Artist"	Franz Kafka
"The Secret Sharer"	Joseph Conrad
"The Drunkard"	Frank O'Connor
"A Father-to-Be"	Saul Bellow
"Mr. Know-All"	Somerset Maugham

Poems

"Who Are You?"	Andrey Voznesensky
"The Waste Places"	James Stephens
"Talking Myself to Sleep At One More Hilton"	John Ciardi
"The Hollow Men"	T. S. Eliot
"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"	T. S. Eliot

Drama

Hamlet	William Shakespeare

Novel

Siddhartha	Herman Hesse

The following resources are especially helpful in providing stimulation for the teacher:

Themes in World Literature	Houghton Mifflin Company
Western Literature: Themes and Writers	McGraw-Hill Book Company
The Search for Self	McDougal, Littell
In Person	Harcourt Brace
Who Am I?	MacMillan Company
Values Clarification	Simon
Search for Values	Center for Learning, Inc.
Journeys	Ginn and Company

The process of planning this unit can be applied to many others, as many as you wish. Literature deals with so many themes.

WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE

John C. Eckman

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The typical classroom writing exercise following the reading of a literary work is a theme analyzing form or content in some specified way. The analysis may be a summary of plot, a study of character, or an examination of setting. It may concern the implications of point of view, metaphorical language, or poetic technique. Academic and intellectual, an exercise of this sort is designed to check and improve reading comprehension—the ability of a student to read critically and appreciatively. The best of such assignments have helped to accomplish that end and deserve to remain in essay examinations and as options for student writing.

As the only or predominant approach to writing about literature, however, analysis lacks appeal for many students—especially the very young, the immature, and the inexperienced. When a difficult reading experience culminates in an even more difficult writing assignment, the result for the student is often painful and repelling. A more likely approach for developing student competence and productivity in both literature and composition is to promote the kinds of writing that are personally involving and gratifying. Although the tasks may be as difficult as the expository exercises, their purposes and rewards may seem less remote.

As the principal way of building this alternate writing program, a teacher should ask students to write in the same forms they are studying—not in the sense of using the masters as models but in the sense of exploring the same genres. "But," some might ask, "is this writing about literature?" In the truest sense it is, for students learn form by using it, understand symbolism by generating their own, and demonstrate knowledge of plot structure by composing stories. And what might the satires and parodies written by students reveal about their understanding of the literature they read?

Presented in the following sections are some specific ways to integrate the reading and writing of stories and poems. Also included are some ideas for extending the composition process to oral and dramatic expression, both live and electronic. Another section features students responses that are variations on the analytic approach. A final part emphasizes the need for students to reach an audience, to share their work.

As a whole, these suggestions show a literature program can also become a composition program. While communicating in many modes, not only in the expository one, students have the opportunity to enhance both literary appreciation and writing ability.

Experimenting with Stories

When reading short stories in class, many students and teachers may judge the art of writing one to be simple and easy. However, even very capable students may soon find such an assignment discouraging and the product disappointing. Since writing short stories is a highly creative task, students should generally be given smaller, less comprehensive assignments.

1. **Completing unfinished stories.** A good way to begin is to ask students to write endings for a story from which the conclusion has been deliberately omitted. A story with a twist at the end, like MacKinlay Kantor's "A Man Who Had No Eyes," makes for enjoyable discussion as students compare their endings. Then, of course, they can make further comparisons with the author's original ending. In this way they can learn what endings do and how they logically flow from earlier elements in the story.

2. **Creating story openings.** Even though students may be unable to write whole stories successfully, they can learn much by writing just the beginnings for stories. They can read one another's openings aloud and discuss what is likely to happen next. Some impromptu storytelling can be fun. The teacher can use these beginnings as starters for full stories as his or her students grow in writing experience.

3. **Using story starters.** Some students will eventually want to try writing a whole story. They may need a start however, to get going. Story starters developed by the teacher or by students are very useful for this purpose. Following are some examples:

> Late one afternoon I was walking through the weedy undergrowth of the meadow outside of town when I saw something shiny below me. As I bent down to examine it, a shadow fell over me. I quickly looked up and saw . . .
>
> The sound of the_____bell resounded through the_____. _____did not move....

4. **Writing serial stories.** Small groups of students can have fun putting together a serial group story, particularly a mysterious or suspenseful one. One after another, each writes a short section leading to a climactic moment; then the next person must extricate a character from danger or otherwise move the plot forward. When completed, such a story may be loosely organized, but the students can learn in an active way how characterizations and plot lines need consistency.

5. **Changing point of view.** One way to reinforce understanding of point of view is to ask students to re-write a short short story, like Katherine Brush's "Birthday Party," from a different point of view. In this story an onlooker eating in a restaurant watches a little drama occurring at another table between a man and his wife. By re-writing from the stance of the man or the woman, for instance, a student learns how a different point of view really makes a different story. If the class has read stories from many points of view (including monologues, letters, diaries, and the variations of first- and third-person narration), reading several of the re-written stories aloud will be entertaining and enlightening.

Playing With Poetry

People have the unique capacity to make almost anything into a game. A schoolboy walking home will invent several games as he kicks a stone on the sidewalk or swings a fallen branch. Likewise, he and his classmates will enjoy what they can do with words—play with their noises, colors, shapes, and ambiguities. From such simple beginnings as riddles and tongue twisters, students may move to the reading and writing of poetry that, while complex, remains fun.

1. **Shaping language.** Most students enjoy the visual impact that words can have. Just as the masters of advertising and television play with the sizes, shapes, and distorted appearances of words, so can students create their own "concrete poetry." After a start with items like_____and_____, they will paper the walls of a classroom with elaborately shaped poems. As they mature in reading experience, they may also enjoy the concrete effects in the works of poets like e. e. cummings.

2. **Writing haiku.** Another entry into the world of word play is found in such excellent short forms as the cinquain, the diamante, and the limeric. Perhaps the ultimate challenge in this group of poems is the popular Japanese form, the haiku. Not so easy as it looks, the haiku provides a splendid opportunity for students to learn about the restrictions of form. Like a ball game, a poem has its boundaries and rules. It is unwise, however, to overstress the mechanical aspects of form, such as writing seventeen syllables in three lines. By encouraging some flexibility in this matter, the teacher can aim at more essential elements of form—like capturing in a single sentence a momentary experience (a snapshot!), perhaps with a little irony or surprise in it. The haiku form offers the teacher the additional bonus of working with single-sentence compositions, a natural way to approach problems of syntax and punctuation. The following haiku, written by fifth- and twelfth-graders (guess who?), were edited with their teachers for sharing with classmates:

> An oak log burns,
> Warms the heart,
> Turns to ash.
>
> Brightly colored leaves
> are falling lightly to the ground--
> a rabbit runs by.
>
> A gem-studded cluster
> melts on my bare hand;
> the snow is falling.
>
> Reflection in the
> water made by trees; the trees
> flow by–a breeze.

3. **Making group poems.** A teacher can use a variety of techniques to help students become aware of poetic form. One way is to ask questions about a photograph or a painting and write students answers in such a manner on the chalkboard that the appearance is poetic (e.g., lines beginning with capital letters). This can be followed up as an exercise in small-group writing and editing. A main purpose of the experience is to show students that several lines do not need to rhyme in order to have poetic effect. The following examples were written by small groups of ninth-graders in response to some questions about Picasso's "The Old Guitarist":

The Man Who Never Was

A tired man moans over his music.
His gaunt face is sad;
His body is limp.
He is a symbol of the
Past,
Present,
And future of his kind.

Blue Mind

The aging man lightly strums his guitar.
His facial features protrude--
Showing his agony in life.
He sits grief-stricken in his ragged
clothes and bare feet.
His nimble fingers now lie motionless,
The fading melody echoing in his
blue mind.

4. **Creating sound effects.** Although students love to play with the sounds of words, they can be turned off if an early and exaggerated emphasis makes poetry a bunch of obnoxious rhythms and forced rhymes. Students will gain more from an approach featuring the playfulness of writing and reading poetry that contains alliteration, onomatopoeia, eye-rhymes (bead, head), and half-rhymes (flown, strewn)—especially if they are not required to memorize the terms. Because of the complexity of verse that is measured and rhymed, writing assignments of this kind should usually be offered as options or be tailored to the individual. Appropriate for many students may be the simple meter and rhyme of the ballad stanza. On the other hand, only rarely will a student have the ability and interest to write a poem as difficult as a sonnet. As an option available to the more advanced student, the result may be a poem like this one written by a twelfth-grader:

I wonder why we find our food in dreams
And feed on colored shadows in the air--
We eat at cloudlike tables, so it seems,
And finished, push away our phantom chairs,
Conversing, then, about the things we'll do
When we are big or rich or on our own,
Pretending we don't know that only through
Our thoughts we'll live tomorrows and be
grown
As we have dreamed. Is it perhaps that we
Can find no other food, and we would die
Without the promise of repast? We see
No joys, so live for what ahead might lie?
But have we lost today? Why, we once thought
This day would bring us all the cake we sought!

Composing in the Media

In a total communication program, it is fitting that the distinctions between written and oral composition be blurred. Students will move naturally from pen and paper to verbal and nonverbal dramatic expression. Even more natural for this generation may be the use of such media as film and tape.

1. **Dialoguing and monologuing.** When the study of dramatic literature proceeds from text to presentation, it can be a lively and active affair for a class of students. By including original student composition and presentation, such study expands the opportunity for creative involvement. The sophistication of a full-length drama is not necessary for this experience; more appropriate are brief dramatic situations involving one, two, or three characters. The movement may be from improvisation and simple skit to extended script. In addition to live presentations, radio-style versions on cassette tape are practical and fun.

2. **Making photo and film stories.** If the resources for composing with cameras are available, students will enjoy learning to communicate in the modern way. They can tell language-based stories, or they can work exclusively in the mode that makes film so powerful—the pictorial image. Even with the most inexpensive of simple cameras and despite a lack of experience, many students can make interesting and dramatic statements about their world. They can show the bustle of the city, the pollution of a stream, the happiness in children's faces.

Responding to Literature

Students respond to literature when they write their own stories, poems, and plays. They also respond when they interpret, analyze, and evaluate what they have read. Although composition ideas for this latter kind of response are abundant, there are some practices which may make this writing more enjoyable for many students.

1. **Writing proverbs.** One easy exercise is to find a common point of interest, like "love," in a group of reading completed by several students. Then each student is asked to write one or more "sayings" or one-sentence generalizations (maxims, adages, etc.) relating some important notion about love as found in one or more of the reading selections. As with haiku, this kind of activity lets the teacher exploit the opportunity to work on sentence building in the context of a single-sentence composition. Following are some student "proverbs" written about "work" after the reading of **A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, The Grapes of Wrath, The Jungle, 1984, Franny and Zooey,** and **The Heart of Darkness**:

Work is the prison which surrounds us.

Devotion to work saves one from decay and despair.

Work gives you the chance to find your own reality.

Hard work is much easier to bear than idleness.

Through work, man is useful to society.

2. **Extracting from journals.** Maintaining a reading journal or log is a good way for students to record personally and privately their reactions and judgments about their reading. Periodically they might be asked to select a journal entry capable of expansion and refinement and to develop it into an analytical essay of the conventional kind. The advantage to the student is that he or she has a personal resource to draw upon. The value of the journal as a student resource is even more evident in those instances where asked to write a paper comparing, contrasting, or otherwise relating elements in different works.

3. **Individualizing essay tests.** Questions that a teacher might ask on an essay examination can be distributed at the beginning of a course to be answered at specified intervals. With the option to choose and modify questions, the individual students can contract to write take-home papers that reflect their interests and abilities. If given the further option to devise original questions, the students will have additional opportunities to think critically and analytically. Student-developed questions may also be distributed for general class use and adaptation.

4. **Personalizing research.** For many students the traditional research paper is an unproductive chore. Nevertheless, many teachers insist that even if the writing is undistinguished, at least their students have learned something about the methods and tools of research. For those interested in more positive results, a game approach to research can culminate both in fun and in skill development. One game begins by giving each student in a class a line or two of verse associated in some way with that individual. Then each is asked to find the poem and the name of the author without the assistance of teacher or classmates. No rewards need to be given, for the fun is in the race. Although some students may not easily discover such useful resources as **Bartlett's** or the librarian, with a little furtive help they can all get through the exercise. Sharing their poems and reactions is an important follow-up step. If options are provided, students may respond with their own poems, dramatic readings, slide-tape shows, and essays on topics like imagery or tone.

Sharing and Publishing

At several points in this chapter, the desirability of students' sharing their writing has been suggested. Just as authors need an audience, so do student writers, and that audience should be larger than one person—the teacher. Because they are students, these novice writers will profit from all the feedback they can get.

1. **Reading papers aloud.** If a student- or teacher-reading of a paper is punitive, threatening, or embarrassing to the student, it is valueless. A teacher should read papers, not to put students on the spot for their mistakes, but to share a clever figure of speech, a funny line, or an entertaining story. Success will engender success. It will also establish a climate in which students will feel comfortable about interpreting orally and dramatizing the works they read and write.

2. **Passing and posting.** As with reading aloud, students will be pleased to have their work circulated and put on bulletin boards—if it is not torn apart or made fun of. This kind of sharing can also generate feedback useful for improving a paper, such as "What does that word mean?" or "I don't quite understand this sentence."

3. **Editing for publication.** While writing privately, anything goes. But if a paper will be presented to an audience in some way, a student will come to appreciate the need for revising and proofreading. If presented as the last step in the writing process, editing will seem natural and useful. The teacher will take advantage of the appropriate moment to teach skills, and students will gain confidence in their ability to make a point without looking "dumb."

4. **Making booklets and magazines.** The writing process will gain added meaning for students if it includes publication. The teacher should promote a torrent of classroom publications, some duplicated and some handwritten. Every student in a class should be assisted to reach an audience of peers and parents. Although the school literary magazine and national writing contests are desirable targets for some student writers, no publications will enhance a reading and writing program as well as those that are class-initiated and developed.

ASSIGNING AND EVALUATING ESSAYS

Alan C. Purves

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One of the traditional means of evaluating student growth and achievement in English and literature courses is through the essay assignment—either the time-restricted in-class essay or the freer out-of-class essay or term-paper. These hallowed modes of student evaluation have been used in many different school settings. In fact, you yourself have probably written a great number of essays in response to assignments dealing with literary topics. Think back on those you enjoyed writing and those you dreaded: What were their respective characteristics?

A teacher assigns essays in order to measure the student's ability to effect some sort of synthetic statement about a literary work or a literary problem. Students are asked to come up with their own solution. The essay does not primarily measure the student's ability to recall facts or generalizations. Rather, the student-written essay is a reflection of a student's ability to come up with a sustained and argued interpretation, evaluation, and description of a selection or with a full statement of the nature of his or her engagement with a literary work. Student writing, therefore, will be more or less formal and personal depending on the nature of the topic, but the writing will be expected to come from the student, to effect a summary statement, and to inform and interest the reader as to the nature of that summary statement. The essay question, therefore, should not deal with trivia nor with simple matters of recall. At the same time, a teacher should not expect a student to be a PhD in English or a practicing critic for **The Sunday Times**. One does expect the student to compose, to order and arrange his or her reasoned response to the selection or selections he or she is dealing with. The topic must, then, be worth the student's spending time and effort on. An essay describing the rhyme scheme of "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" is probably not worth the effort; one describing the mood of the poem might be more worthwhile; one comparing the mood with that of "The Road Not Taken" might be even more worthwhile—for some students.

Making the Assignment

On the one hand students like to be told what is expected of them; how they will be judged, whether on neatness or originality or both, whether on number of references to the text or breadth of generalization. Once they have learned the general demands of the teacher, they do like some latitude, some space for their imaginativeness and inventiveness to take hold and go to work. The good assignment is that which allows for both to occur. In some cases, as in the in-class timed essay, specificity of the assignment is more important. The students need to *know how much* is expected of them in the limited amount of time they have. They know they will probably be judged against each other (few teachers can avoid it) and so they all want a fair start. The term project, however, can be such as to allow more variety in specific shapings of the topic and in particular solutions.

Actually, one hopes that by the time a student gets around to writing or creating a term project, it will be one that **the student** has chosen because **he** or **she** has been giving to it some shape and thought throughout the year. The student's creative process is then one of constantly evolving generalization and specificity—i.e., topic and content may undergo radical evolutionary alteration in focus and direction as the student makes the project grow.

In both cases, however, the teacher or student should be careful to narrow the topic, to make quite clear what it is the students are expected to do or expect themselves to do. A topic like "Write an essay contrasting **Lord of the Flies** and **Robinson Crusoe**" is as vague as "Describe your summer vacation." Most students would have a hard time figuring out what to say about either topic. The points of comparison between the two books are many. Both deal with castaways; both deal with the struggle for survival; both deal with the primitive. Both contain scenes of human sacrifice. Both are novels. If students were to explore the contrasts between the two books, they might begin with the fact that one has an omniscient narrator and the other a first-person narrator; one has an episodic structure, the other is concentrated; one has a larger context in time than the other. Thematically, one deals with solitary man, the other with social man; one deals with man's power to triumph over nature, the other with man's inability to form a cohesive social group. This list of points of comparison and points of contrast could go on much longer. Each point of comparison or each point of contrast could be developed into a paragraph, a page, or even an essay. In making the assignment, then, a teacher might secure better papers by specifying that the comparison and contrast should deal with theme, or structure, or some other specific point. The following assignment is much clearer:

> Compare and contrast **Lord of the Flies** and **Robinson Crusoe** as they deal with the way a person's separation from civilization affects the person or the civilization.

It would be possible to suggest a structure to that essay by adding the following (particularly for an in-class paper):

In your essay spend one paragraph showing how each author established the fact that the character or characters are separated from civilization. Then treat each of the books separately showing the main effects of this separation of the characters. Do the various characters try to hold on to civilization? How? Do they give in and become primitive? Finally, in a paragraph, say whether you think both Defoe and Golding are making the same comment about people and civilization? How do they differ?

To a certain extent that essay closes off the number of side alleys that students might have wandered along, but it does not hamper the creativity of the student. There are several possible answers to the subquestions, and the good answer could be quite original, although dealing with a sharply defined problem.

I have singled out the comparison question, because it seems to me that it is the most useful sort of critical essay to suggest. It presents a problem worthy of attention, and it presents two writers and asks that the student assume the dual task of finding out the significant points of commonality and the significant points of difference. An alternate kind of question that also presents the problem of relating specifics to generalization is that of relating two or more works to a thematic or aesthetic principle. What do the specific works have in common that is of significance? How do the works relate to that common point? Questions of this order are questions like these:

What problems in American society do the writings that you have read of both Langston Hughes and N. Scott Momaday point to? Do the Black and Indian perspectives (as these two writers represent those groups) show these problems in different lights?

This topic calls for the description of one, two, or more specific problems, an illustration of how each work shows the problem, and a comparison and contrast of the works. Another kind of topic might be as follows:

What is concrete poetry? You have read a number of poems that get part of their effect from being seen. Is this the only definition of concrete poetry? What other aspects might make up the definition. Is the poem

Lighght
a concrete poem?

All of the topics I have mentioned thus far seem somewhat cold and formal, perhaps because most essays do take up formal problems of definition, comparison and contrast, and arguing a thesis. The topic might be cast in a more informal manner but the problem remains. Here are some samples:

Topic

Think back over the works you have most enjoyed this year or quarter. What do they have in common? Do they tell you anything about your taste?

What makes a story a good one to film? Think over what you have read and select stories that would film well. Do they help you say what a filmable story is?

Think of a story or play you have read that has been made into a television show. What changes had to be made in the story to make it work on television? Which version did you find appealed to you most? Why?

Recently a citizen in another town has written to the school board that certain of the selections taught in that school are corrupting the youth of the community. The writer cited **(insert three fairly popular titles your class has discussed)**, but is generally vague in his charges. Compose a letter to the board supporting or attacking the citizen's charges.

Still other kinds of topics that students might use to display their writing talents include the following. (Each topic needs to be developed and adapted to the works that you have been teaching.)

—Make an anthology of the selections you have read which you think will most appeal to students your age. How would you organize it? Write a rationale for the choice and order you have selected.

—What selection that has been studied should not be read by any student your age? Write a defense of your choice.

—Think of a selection that you particularly liked when you first read it. Write down your recollection of how you felt when you first read it. Read it again and jot down your feelings this time. How have you changed? Have you remained the same? Has the work changed? In what way?

—Some of the selections you have read have in common that they were written by **(one writer, writers from a certain country, or period of time, or culture)**. What, if anything, do the selections have in common that help you describe **(the writer, the country, period, or culture)**?

—Has reading poems or plays or stories or novels influenced you in any way? How or why not? Describe specifically the effect or lack of effect of your reading.

A quite different assignment is that in which the teacher asks students to "discuss the work," and the students remain free to respond to the work in any way that seems appropriate to them. This assignment can be used with a text that the student or the teacher has selected, and it assumes that any written response can be considered a critical response. The student is permitted (even encouraged) to try any one of the full range of responses used by literary critics over the centuries. The student is evaluated on the adequacy of the **development** of his or her preferred way of responding. This open assignment, given repeatedly over the course of several months, seems to be a better way of evaluating the effects of instruction (or said another way, of assessing growth in response to literature) than the usual text-specific essay questions.

Evaluating the Open Response

To determine what has been formulated as the response to the literary selection, the teacher must determine whether it appears to be answering one of four major questions:

a. Affective: What effect does the work have on me as an individual?

b. Objective: What is the nature of the work?

c. Interpretive: What does the work mean?

d. Evaluative: Is the work good?

To this might be added a fifth response that does not deal with the work itself—an attack on the assignment, a description of the classroom, or what have you. These "fifth" responses seem unclassifiable and,

although interesting, not susceptible to analysis (they might be placed with the "don't know's" on a questionnaire). Each of the four major questions can be subdivided into secondary and tertiary questions, but the larger classification should suffice.

a. **Affective: What effect does the work have on me as an individual?** Subsumed under this question are such matters as whether the students find the work believable, whether they think the people in it are good or bad, whether the characters remind the students of people they know or of situations they have observed in life, whether they like the work, what sort of mood it puts them into (as opposed to the "mood" of the work), and other responses of a personal nature. The student might talk of their prejudices, of their emotions, of their thoughts—in sum, of the personal experience they have had.

b. **Objective: What is the nature of the work?** Included under this question are various attempts to describe the work "objectively." There might be a lengthy retelling of the story, a description of the language, style, or form of the work, a discussion of the literary devices (metaphor and personification) in it, of its point of view, or of its plot and structure. There might, too, be some attempt to treat the work as a part of literary history: to relate it to its author's life, to the times in which it was written, to the student's sense of the genre and of intellectual history. The essays in this category will be generally academic.

c. **Interpretive: What does the work mean?** This question also covers questions of character analysis and of author's intention, as well as questions about symbols, "deep" or "hidden" meanings, morals, or messages. The meaning may be psychological, social, historical, political, or the like. It might deal with the whole work or only with parts of it. It might be an epigrammatic slogan that the student sees as the "message" of the work.

d. **Evaluative: Is the work good?** Included here would be responses that dealt with whether the work was well-written, whether it was effective in moving or amusing the reader, whether it was "sincere" or "imaginative," whether it was an important work in that it dealt with a serious matter. The evaluative criteria might be formal, personal, or substantive; in any case the evaluation will be supported by reference to one of the other three questions.

After you determine the category within which the response falls, then judge the adequacy of the response. In each case, the judgment should be on a scale ranging from superior through good and barely adequate to inadequate. The scale would look as follows:

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
superior		adequate (good)		barely adequate		inadequate

The actual scoring is best carried out if examples of Points 7, 5, 3, and 1 are first located in the set of responses and used as models against which to make further judgments. You or your department could eventually designate agreed upon models for each scale point for all four kinds of responses.

This kind of **descriptive** assessment can be carried out repeatedly during the course, each time a student responds in writing to a selection, one of his or her own choosing or one supplied by the teacher. The problem of grading the student does not have to enter until the last moment—thereby keeping the focus throughout the course on **evaluating growth**—and even then should be based on scale scores obtained from several responses or perhaps only from the last few responses.

a. **Affective: What effect does the work have on me as an individual?** The **clearly superior** answer to this question will have both a clear statement of the effect and a clear statement of its cause. If we think of a **superior** response as one that describes an equation between what goes on in the work and what goes on in the psyche of the reader, a **good** description will cover both sides of the equation, but not with the clarity of the superior one. An answer that clearly describes the effect without pinpointing the cause, such as a highly vivid description of the student's mood upon finishing the work might also be good, but if it seems vague and ill-defined it would probably be classified as **barely adequate**. An **inadequate** response would be one that seemed not articulated ("I didn't like it" and nothing more).

b. **Objective: What is the nature of the work?** The **clearly superior** answer to this work is one that describes several of the work's facets accurately, one that rises above a mere catalog of parts. A **good** response might lack the summary statement that a superior one would have, it might lack an over-riding hypothesis, or it might not fully account for what hypothesis it sets forth. A **barely adequate** response would be one that simply retold the story. An **inadequate** response would be one that was factually incorrect.

c. **Interpretive: What does the work mean?** The **superior** answer would present fully stated and supported hypothesis that would account for most of the details in the text. The **good** answer would also be verifiable but less adequately so. Questions of interpretation depend upon the assent of all parties to the plausibility of the grounds of interpretation; nearly all would agree that **Hamlet** can be related to the theme of the relationship between appearance and reality, but few can assent to the interpretation that it deals with student rebellion in a technocratic age. The last could be demonstrated to the demonstrator's satisfaction but not to that of many others. If it were a nicely

enclosed argument, one would rate it as **barely adequate**. An **inadequate** answer is one that cannot formulate an interpretation ("I don't understand" is an honest, but not an adequate statement).

4. **Evaluative: Is the work good?** The **clearly superior** answer formulates a criterion and measures the work against that criterion. The **good** answer either does not have a full formulation or an adequate statement of the measuring process. The **barely adequate** answer would have a very weak statement of one part, and an **inadequate** one would omit either the criterion or the measure.

Judging Various Types of Written Responses

A serious question is the extent to which the judgment of the responses is actually a judgment of writing. To a certain extent it is—and necessarily so in our highly verbal society. However, you must also consider the responses apart from their expression; you must determine whether a response has been formulated and whether a connection has been made between the work and the response. This is the intellectual aspect of the task. It may well be that superior responses will appear in unorthodox forms—for example, as interpretation of a poem through a highly developed picture or an epigram. The judgment of the merit of these responses must be an **ad hoc** judgment and must be admittedly subjective, but it must be the subjective judgment of a professional who is willing to reward and able to recognize creativity.

None of the essay topics we have previously mentioned has a single best answer; there is room for individual response and individual development. This being so, the judgment of an essay rests **not** on the student's coming up with the teacher's answer, but with the presenting of a clear and interesting account of the **student's** own answer. This judgment is subjective on the part of the teacher, but a teacher seeks to make dispassionate judgment. That is, the teacher admits biases but seeks to render a nonprejudiced criticism of the essay. A teacher may well use other class members to judge the essay on the two major criteria for judging written work: Does it make sense? Is it interesting? These are the only two important criteria. Anyone applying these criteria is armed with two weapons: the ability to misunderstand and a willingness to be bored. If a student can counteract those two forces, the essay is successful. Most students and teachers can apply these criteria honestly and convincingly. The scale that might best be used is the seven-point scale we have already described (page 21). This scale is admittedly subjective, but it is easily understood and fairly easy to apply. More elaborate evaluation systems—ones that look at style, diction, grammar, and mechanics—may be useful diagnostically but are probably not as serviceable for a general judgment. Both the simple and the elaborate scale should be used, but it is the function, not the absoluteness of the scale, which determines which should be used when.

In judging the adequacy of a comparison-and-contrast essay, you should make sure that the grounds of the comparison are reasonable and worth paying attention to. A paper comparing Hamlet to Donald Duck because both use language and have uncles and nephews is making a trivial comparison. A paper comparing Donald Duck to Bottom because both are braggarts who receive their comeuppance makes more sense. The points of differency should be equally worth paying attention to: that Donald Duck was created by Walt Disney and Bottom by Shakespeare is not significant, but it might be significant that Donald is greedy in a way that Bottom is not. Significance and accuracy, then, are two of the best standards of judging the adequacy of a comparison-and-contrast essay.

Judging a paper supporting a generalization means judging the use of evidence and the inductive process. Has the writer used evidence that supports the conclusion? Has the writer suppressed evidence? Does the conclusion follow from the evidence? What alternative conclusions are there and has the writer attended to them?

A paper of definition can be judged on the basis of whether the definition is both inclusive and exclusive. A good definition should show clearly that all things that might be thought of as belonging to the thing being defined do indeed belong. For example, "A poem is a verbal statement that rhymes" is an inadequate definition in that it assumes all poems rhyme. On the other hand, a good definition should also exclude. For example, "A poem is a group of words" is much too general.

An argument of a thesis should be judged on the basis of the argument. Has the writer picked a good major premise? "People should be allowed to read whatever they want" is a fairly good premise, but are there no damaging books? Perhaps "People should be allowed to read what is good for them" is better, but isn't there a catch there too? Following the establishment of the premise, one must be able to make the argument that follows without fallacy or distortion of logic. Most books on rhetoric have a section on fallacy.

Judging the more personal expression is of course difficult. Perhaps one should not judge it, but simply accept it. Yet we think there is reason to hold students accountable for their understanding of those personal expressions. The poem or the stream-of-consciousness diary written as a response to a novel or play must, we think, be followed by some conscious attempt at explanation and justification. That attempt at bringing response into communicative language is what teaching literature is about. The

personal expression, be it a poem, diary, or whatever, can be evaluated, but its evaluation must be done carefully and with attention both to the power and privacy of the individual students and to the necessity for rendering experience into intelligible and interesting communication.

One of the best ways to think of the evaluation of a student poem or a stream-of-consciousness diary, or for that matter **any** student-written paper, is to play the role of the critic of a literary work. What questions does one ask of the work? What is the writer doing? What effect does the work have? How has the work been put together? All of these questions must precede the judgmental one of good or bad. Too many teachers have a set mind about what a student essay should be like. Can teachers really predict so accurately what the ideal critical or personal or summary essay is? We doubt it. Teachers should be open and inquisitive and tentative about what the student has written.

Practically, then the teacher must be accepting, but must be willing to say, "I do not understand you," or "You are not interesting me very much." These are subjective judgments, true, but they need to be stated and acknowledged for their subjectivity. The student can understand this comment and can seek to become clearer and more interesting. From this point of the teacher's judgment and the student's acknowledgment, both student and teacher, together, can begin an exploration of how to render the student's experience more intelligible and more interesting. We do not recommend, therefore, extensive marking of papers with many marginal notations; rather we recommend the use of such marginalia as "Unclear," "I don't understand you," "What do you mean?" The student should write or talk out what was intended; from that can come an adequate revision.

In recommending few marginal comments, we are referring to the **awk, sp, ss, gr, tr, frag** type of mark. A question such as we have indicated, a well-placed "good," or "nice," and an extensive comment on the total substance of the paper are well received and useful. The student appreciates a substantive comment and will tolerate a few references to style and proofreading, but not too many. When the grammar or the style interferes with the message, then it is pertinent to spend some time correcting it, preferably through a conference. All of us have some pet stylistic practice that we can't tolerate in student papers. Perhaps it is just as well to let students know our foibles at the beginning of the instructional period. When these are out in the open, student and teacher can then get on to the real business, which is writing and communicating.

To help in this reading and correcting function, it is useful to have the whole class or small groups react to each other's writing. This process saves the teacher time and enables the judgment of the effectiveness of a piece of writing to lie in the hands of a larger audience, and perhaps an audience closer to that for whom the student is writing. These group evaluations can be hard on a student, but the hardness of one's peers is often more tolerable than that of one's teacher. This shift of the judging responsibility also enables the teacher to serve as tutor and advocate. Very often the teacher will have to step in to show the real merit of the paper, to act in just the same sort of tentative and open manner that has been manifested towards the literature. To encourage that tentativeness and openness about all sorts of writing—literary, responsive, and expository—is the whole purpose of a literature program. The students' comments about each other's writing are a good test of how effective your teaching has been.

DRAMA AS LITERATURE

Norman Potts

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A play is for performance, not for reading. The authenticity of this axiom cannot be denied, but it is equally axiomatic that if plays can be experienced only in full production, most playwrights will remain totally unknown to most of the populace. Satisfaction, therefore, must come from reading plays (let's see and hear as many play productions as feasible, but realize that numbers will for many reasons be limited; the number of plays read need not be limited). The first step to overcoming student apathy toward reading plays is to teach them how pleasurably to read a play; a method of reading which, admittedly, is not easy, at least for the inexperienced.

The student must recognize immediately some elementary truths about a play before setting out to read one:

1. The playwright deals almost solely in dialog—unlike novelists or short story writers who can and do supply the reader with all kinds of descriptions and psychological analyses, the playwright must tell all through dialog, direct address.

2. When the playwright does suggest physical environments and/or character traits and movements, it is only in the most skeletal of phrasing. Normally, the reader must supply all required detail through his or her own imagination stimulated by character dialog.

3. The playwright has only six elements with which to construct a play:

   a. PLOT—a story which is nothing more than an action (conflict) developed through a series of logically related episodes (lesser actions).

   b. CHARACTER—agents who perform the action (enact the plot) through some overt means and are appropriate and necessary for the particular plot that is being related.

   c. THOUGHT—the mental activity exercised by the characters, whether it be in making deliberated decisions or reacting on a purely emotional level. Thought can also be identified in terms of idea or theme perpetrated by the playwright and underlying the entire play.

   d. DIALOG—the words of the thinking or emoting characters in action; the most obvious and continually employed element of the play.

   e. MUSIC—this has to do with the rhythm (music) of the spoken word and becomes an element most worthy of consideration when the play is being performed, not just read, or when the play is written in poetry.

   f. SPECTACLE—the visual aspect of the play: setting, costume, lighting, make-up, and decoration. Most apparent in the actual production of a play, but a necessary element (much of it supplied by the reader's imagination) for the reader of a play if he or she is going to get full impact from reading the play.

It should be noted that the first five elements listed are highly interrelated and interdependent and that the listed order is unchangeable. That is, the sort of plot or story being told demands certain kinds of characters who think and react in a certain way. Their thoughts can be stated only in dialog which in turn determines the music or rhythm created by the spoken word. The reverse interdependence also exists; that is, a predetermined music or rhythm pattern determines certain word or dialog needs which reflect only certain thoughts which characterize certain types of characters who determine the kind of story that is being told. What all of this really means is that in truth no one element can be discussed or examined completely as a separate entity. Any given element is so dependent upon the element which comes before and the one which comes after it that no single element can be examined without some acknowledgement of the determinate quality of the other elements.

How then does a student read a play? Additionally, what are some activities—oral, written, creative—in which the student can become involved and by so doing learn understanding and appreciation of the drama as art and literature?

1. ***The student approaches the play with an awareness of the dramatists' techniques:***

   a. nearly all revelations come through dialog.

   b. short descriptive statements and indicated movements serve only to stimulate the imagination.

ACTIVITIES:

A. Prepare a written or oral report discussing the apparent differences in writing style and technique used in a one-act play and a short story.

B. Select a short story and adapt (rewrite) it into a dramatic script.

C. Select a one-act play and adapt (rewrite) it into a short story.

D. Make a comparative study of the structure and form of a story which has been published as both a short story and as a play—**The Lottery** by Shirley Jackson would serve as an example.

E. Listen to a radio drama—note the high degree of emphasis put upon dialog and the auditory senses. How significant are sound effects, narrative, and music?

G. Select dialog passages from a play which illustrate dialog providing clues to setting, character appearance, character personality, thought, conflicts, and mood or atmosphere.

H. Read a wide variety of plays.

2. ***The student makes an immediate effort to put together a viable picture of the setting or environment of the play—the student may be well into the reading before having all of the necessary information for a complete picture.***

ACTIVITIES:

A. Prepare a sketch (pencil, crayon, water-color, etc.) of the set or setting of the play—include all that the audience would see if witnessing this play in performance.

B. Discuss the setting for a particular play—be able to justify the inclusions, the style, and the period of each item of the environment. Put particular emphasis on the time (period) of the play—how does one know what the elements are which are necessary for the setting? What items are dictated by the playwright; what items are left to the creative imagination of designer or reader?

C. Draw a floor plan of the visible scene of the play, but add the surroundings of the particular room or space that is the base of action. That is, where is the character when he or she exists left—in the street, a closet, a bedroom, an open area, on the way to the village, overboard and floundering in the open sea, etc.

D. Build a three-dimensional model for the production of the play.

E. In what ways, if any, does the set directly affect the course of action in the play?

F. Read a wide variety of plays.

3. ***The student determines, as quickly as possible, who the characters are and what their relationships are to and with one another.***

ACTIVITIES:

A. List all of the characters in the play with an identifying statement for each.

B. Chart a family tree, when appropriate.

C. Write a descriptive character sketch for one or more of the key characters.

D. Prepare sketchs (pencil, crayon, water-color, etc.) of the costumes worn by the various characters.

E. Discuss the costumes for a particular set of characters—be able to justify the design suggestions and discuss in matters of color, line, style, and period for each costume. How does one know what is "right" for a particular costume? What aspects are dictated by the playwright; what items are left to the creative imagination of the designer or reader? Can costumes show character relationships? How?

F. Improvise an enactment of one of the characters in a situation other than those found in the script.

G. Prepare improvisations of scenes based upon character traits and given situations. Work in groups of two or three so that by-play and reaction become important in the character portrayal. Speech should come spontaneously from the characterizations.

H. Listen to recordings of the spoken word—what does vocal inflection, variety, tone, emphasis, timing, the pause, etc. tell the listener about the speaker or character?

I. In what way are character relationships the cause of conflicts in the play?

J. Determine whether or not a particular character is developed sufficiently to seem "real." How does the playwright provide this development? How much development is left to the interpretation and imagination of the reader?

K. Read a wide variety of plays.

4. ***The student recognizes that the plot is probably the most important element of the play and that it is constructed in some logical sequence of events.***

ACTIVITIES:

A. Determine the primary conflict of this play: 1. character vs. character, 2. character vs. society, 3. character vs. himself or herself.

B. Trace the complications in the action of the plot. Where does the major crisis occur? The climax? Is there a logic to the odering of events?

C. Suspense is achieved through posing currently unanswered questions. List the series

of questions posed as they occur within the play.

D. Act out a scene or two from the play. Most benefit for the performers and the classroom spectators would be achieved if the performers spend a few sessions in rehearsal. The script need not be memorized, but great familiarity is needed as well as a rehearsal plan of movement for the characters to follow.

E. Develop a determined conflict into a dramatic piece; construct and write a play.

F. Draw a diagram which illustrates the plot construction of a play.

G. Compare plot structures of a television detective drama and a situation comedy; a soap opera segment and a hospital series drama; a tragedy and a comedy; or a serious problem play and a farce.

H. For any given play, determine if the plot is clear and interesting—vital requirements for any good play.

I. Read a wide variety of plays.

5. ***The student is ready and willing to exercise the imagination—materialize the entire play in the mind's eye. See and hear each character perform in a complete environment. In this way, the whole literary art work, the play, comes alive and is significant.***

ACTIVITIES:

A. Discuss why and how this play arouses, sustains, and satisfies the reader's interest.

B. Discuss the effects that this play produces: emotional, intellectual, humorous, or serious.

C. Write an essay on the statement made by the dramatist in this particular play.

D. Compare and contrast this play with other literary works in terms of story, character development and treatment, ideas, language, or statement.

E. Prepare a reading of a scene from or the whole play—various students reading aloud separate roles.

F. Listen to a recording of a play—moderns as well as the classics are readily available.

G. Record a radio drama; listen to the drama in class; and discuss it as a play—its dramatic effects.

H. Watch a television drama (via video tape or as a homework assignment) and discuss it.

I. See a popular movie and discuss it as a work of dramatic art.

J. Select a picture or painting reproduction which captures the essence of a given play.

K. Write a critical review of a play.

L. Read the review written by a professional critic and then read the play.

M. Openly discuss the pleasure and human understanding that comes from reading plays.

N. Discuss plays in historical context pointing out that the playwrights may have been something of a seer or prophet.

O. Read a wide variety of plays.

It should be remembered that drama can be studied in terms of its spirit or meaning or in terms of its construction. A combination of the two studies is probably most ideal. Do beware, however, of overstudy of any given play; it is certainly possible to kill interest in the drama by discussing it or writing about it to the point that play reading is a dreaded activity. Teach in moderation. Also keep in mind that a students learn and grow when they can make discoveries on their own. What better literary form than drama exists to provide the student with the wherewithal to discover insights into human behavior and characterization? The playwright provides the plot, the characters, the thought, the dialog; the student has only to read with avidness and make the discoveries.

Play List

Major Plays worthy of study:

ANDROCLES AND THE LION–Shaw

ANTIGONE–Anouilh

BLITHE SPIRIT–Coward

BLOOD WEDDING–Lorca

BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK–Kaufman and Connelly

THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE–Brecht

CHARLEY'S AUNT–Thomas

THE CORN IS GREEN–Williams

DESPARATE HOURS–Hayes

THE DREAM PLAY–Strindberg

A FLEA IN HER EAR–Feydeau

THE FLIES–Sartre

THE GLASS MENAGERIE–Williams

THE GOOD WOMAN OF SETZUAN–Brecht

THE GRASS HARP–Capote

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST–Wilde

INHERIT THE WIND–Lawrence and Lee

J. B.–MacLeish

THE LADY'S NOT FOR BURNING–Fry

THE LARK–Anouilh

THE LITTLE FOXES–Hellman

LOOK BACK IN ANGER–Osborne

LOVERS–Friel

MACBETH–Shakespeare

THE MADWOMAN OF CHAILLOT–Giraudoux

MOTHER COURAGE–Brecht

MOURNING BECOMES ELECTRA–O'Neill

THE NIGHT OF JANUARY 16th–Rand

OEDIPUS–Sophocles

OUR TOWN–Wilder

THE RIVALS–Sheridan

ROMEO AND JULIET–Shakespeare

R. U. R.–Capek

THE SCARECROW–Mackaye

THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH–Wilder

THE STAR–SPANGLED GIRL–Simon

TEN LITTLE INDIANS–Christie

WAITING FOR GODOT–Beckett

THE WINGLESS VICTORY–Anderson

WINTERSET–Anderson

One-Act plays worthy of study:

THE APOLLO OF BELLAC–Giraudoux

AIRA DA CAPO–Millay

THE BIRTHDAY OF THE INFANTA–Wilde

THE BOOK–Chekhov

BOX AND COX–Morton

BURY THE DEAD–Shaw

THE CASE OF THE CRUSHED PETUNIAS– Williams

THE CLOD–Beach

THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS–Shaw

THE DEVIL AND DAINEL WEBSTER–Benet

THE END OF THE BEGINNING–O'Casey

THE FLATTERING WORD–Kelly

FUMED OAK–Coward

THE HAPPY JOURNEY–Wilder

'Ile–O'Neill

THE LOTTERY–Jackson

THE MAKER OF DREAMS–Down

A MARRIAGE PROPOSAL–Chekhov

A MEMORY OF TWO MONDAYS–Miller

MINNIE FIELD–Conkle

THE MONKEY'S PAY–Jacobs

THE MOON OF THE CARIBBEES–O'Neill

THE OLD LADY SHOWS HER MEDALS–Barrie

RIDERS TO THE SEA–Synge

THE SANDBOX–Albee

SORRY, WRONG NUMBER–Fletcher

SPREADING THE NEWS–Gregory

THE STILL ALARM–Kaufman

SUNDAY COSTS FIVE PESOS–Niggli

TRIFLES–Glaspell

THE TWELVE POUND LOCK–Barrie

27 WAGONS FULL OF COTTON–Williams

WAITING FOR LEFTY–Odets

SOURCES FOR MORE IDEAS ON TEACHING LITERATURE

Organizations

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER, better known as ERIC, a national system of clearinghouses, each with its own specialty. The clearinghouse at NCTE (see below) specializes in reading and communication skills. Write NCTE for a copy of "ERIC: The System and How to Use It." ERIC offers access to "nearly 1,000 selected educational reports and over 1,200 articles in almost 600 English and some foreign language education journals." An invaluable source for ideas.

ILLINOIS ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 100 English Bldg., University of Illinois, 61801. IATE sponsors district meetings, a state convention and the **English Bulletin.** Eight issues deal with a range of topics of interest. March 1975 issue, for example, reported the "Best Illinois High School Poetry of 1974."

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois, 61801. The NCTE publishes or distributes many materials for teachers of english in addition to publishing several journals. The **English Journal** is of special interest to secondary teachers. In nine issues **English Journal** reviews texts, prints articles describing successful teaching practices, lists items related to English education in ERIC, provides information on nonprint material helpful in the English class, and in general, keeps English teachers up to date on developments in the language arts.

Periodicals

English Journal (see entry above)

Journal of Reading. (8 vols.) International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Rd., Newark, Delaware 19711. Many helpful insights into reading problems, reading interests of adolescents, including book reviews and strategies for teaching literature with the accent on reading development are published in the journal.

Learning: The Magazine for Creative Teaching. (9 issues.) Education Today Co., Inc., 530 University Avenue, Palo Alto, California 94301. Emphasis is on elementary, middle, and junior high groups but adaptation is readily made. Ideas, materials, activities, current concerns and a potpourri of items found here. Fun to read.

Media and Methods. (9 issues.) North American Publishing Co., 134 N. 13th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107. Devoted to a multi-media approach to teaching. Discusses books, tapes, films, recordings, and other materials useful in English classes. Often features articles dealing with teaching strategies in the English class. For example, see the March 1975 issue for an interesting article suggesting "Using Film Language to Understand Poetry."

Resource for English and the Language Arts; Catalogue of Publications. This catalogue lists all the publications of NCTE as well as those distributed by NCTE. A sample of the types of materials available follows: **Measuring Growth in English** by Paul B. Diederich; **Alternative Strategy in English Classrooms** edited by M. Robert Graham; **Classroom Practices in Teaching English, 1974-75: Revision** edited by Allen Berger and Blanche Hope Smith; **A Thousand Topics for Composition: Revised** prepared by a Special Projects Committee of IATE and chaired by Kenneth Ettner; **They Really Taught Us How to Write** edited by Patricia Geuder, Linda Harvey, Dennis Loyd, and Jack Wages. This list could be extended by many titles, but this should be sufficient to indicate the practicality of the selections available.

Books

Brown, George I., Thomas Yeomans and Liles Grizzard. **The Live Classroom: Innovation through Confluent Education and Gestalt.** New York: The Viking Press, 1975. This book provides many examples and strategies for a confluent approach to teaching. (Confluent education refers to the process of teaching and learning in which the affective and cognitive functions of learning flow together.) The last section of the book is devoted to illustrations for the English class.

Burton, Dwight L. **Literature Study in the High School**, 3rd ed. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc. 1970. This book discusses several approaches to literature and provides examples of typical lessons. Composition, language study and drama roles in the literature curriculum are examined. Takes up the function and nature of literature written for adolescents.

_____, Kenneth L. Donelson, Bryant Fillian, Beverly Haley. **Teaching English Today**. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1975. A methods text with many teaching ideas and excellent bibliographies. Especially valuable are the four appendices: "One Hundred Junior Novels for English Classes," "One Hundred Short Films for English Classes," "Eighteen Thematic Unit Ideas," and "Twenty Sample Activity Cards for English Classes."

Dunning, Stephen and Alan B. Howes. **Literature for Adolescents**. Glenview: Scott Foresman and Co., 1975. This book features lengthy sections of practical advice for teaching poetry, short stories, junior books, novels, and drama. Some attention is given to television.

Hook, J.N. **The Teaching of High School English**, 4th ed. New York: The Ronald Press, 1972. A methods text. Especially helpful are the "idea boxes" at the end of each chapter. Teaching strategies are noted there.

Judy, Stephen N. **Explorations in the Teaching of Secondary English: A Source Book for Experimental Teaching.** New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., Inc., 1974. A methods text with the idea in mind that the teacher should find the methods which work for him/her. Many interesting and different ideas suggested.

Malmstrom, Jean. **Understanding Language: A Primer for the Language Arts Teacher**. New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1977. Part I provides background of information for language arts teachers about language and linguistics as well as teaching suggestions. Part two applies linguistics to language arts teaching of reading, literature and writing. Very readable and helpful.

Moffett, James and Betty Jane Wagner. **Student-Centered Language Arts and Reading, K-13: A Handbook for Teachers**, 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973. Moffett and Wagner draw a distinction between student-centered curriculum and individualized instruction. In the first, it is probable that everyone could be doing something different at the same time. In the second, often classmates are doing the same thing in small groups. Daily lessons are out, according to the authors, but this does not mean that teachers do not plan. They suggest many activities and a philosophy for this approach. Moffett is the major force behind the **Interaction** series, a complete program for the language arts.

Pooley, Robert C. **The Teaching of English Usage**. Urbana: The National Council of Teachers of English, 1974. This book is an updated version of **Teaching English Usage** first published in 1946 and as such informs the English teacher about attitudes toward usage in the past and in the present. Pooley's final four chapters provide guidance for incorporating usage into the elementary, junior high and high school curriculum. Suggestions for teaching are given.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS*

American Theatre Association
1317 F Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20004

The Secondary School Theatre Association and Children's Theatre/Creative Drama Association are affiliates of this national theatre organization which holds an annual convention and publishes materials of interest to K-12 teachers.

Central States Speech Association
Dr. David M. Berg, Executive Secretary
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas

Illinois Association of Teachers of English
Mr. Wilmer Lamar, Executive Secretary
100 English Building
Urbana, Illinois 61801

Illinois Speech and Theatre Association
Central Office, MacMurray College
Jacksonville, Illinois 62650

The ISTA publishes a newsletter and journal, holds an annual convention with meetings of interest to teachers, K-12, and sponsors workshops.

Illinois Theatre Association
P.O. Box 2480
Station A
Champaign, Illinois 61820

This organization has an annual convention, activities such as the Illinois High School Theatre Festival.

National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Road
Urbana, Illinois 61801

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills is at the same address.

Oral Interpretation Workshop.

This is a statewide organization of twelve universities and colleges which meets each Spring at a different campus each year. Membership is limited to college-level faculty and students, but visitors are always welcome. For information, contact Charlotte Waisman, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, Illinois 60625.

Speech Communication Association
5205 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, Virginia 22401

The SCA has two publications of interest to K-12 teachers: **Communication Education**, a journal for speech educators; and **Talk-Back**, a newsletter for teachers. **Communication Education**, formerly called **The Speech Teacher** is available in college and university libraries, or one may subscribe by joining the SCA.

The ERIC/SCA Speech Communication Clearinghouse at the SCA address has listings of many materials and bibliographies.

* Each organization conducts an annual convention.

WORKSHOPS AND FESTIVALS

Colleges and universities in Illinois hold summer workshops and offer short courses for teachers. Contact the Speech Communication Department, English Department, Theatre Department, Communications Department, or in some cases, Departments of Education at each campus for further information or contact the Illinois Office of Education for a composite listing.

Illinois High School Theatre Festival

This annual event is cosponsored by the Illinois Office of Education and Illinois Theatre Association. It provides workshops in curricula and production techniques for students and teachers, full-length student productions, short experimental student productions, and special events.

Wisconsin Oral Interpretation Festival

Outside of Illinois there is a Wisconsin Oral Interpretation Festival held in the early Fall. Write William E. McDonnell at University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire.

Young Authors Conference

Each year, the Illinois Language Experience Special Interest Council and the Illinois Office of Education sponsor a young authors conference. Contact the Illinois Office of Education for information.